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TAGS: [DRC PREL UNSC PGOV ETTC](#)
SUBJECT: UN/DRC SANCTIONS: UNANIMOUS COUNCIL SUPPORT FOR
RENEWED SANCTIONS IN DRC

Classified By: COUNSELOR MARY C. PHEE, FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

11. (C) SUMMARY: Peruvian PermRep Jorge Voto-Bernales, who is the chairman of the DRC Sanctions Committee ("the Committee"), briefed the Security Council on June 23 on the occasion of the Committee's annual sanctions review. There was Council consensus that the sanctions regime--which consists of an arms embargo and targeted sanctions on individuals violating the embargo, recruiting child soldiers, or impeding disarmament, and which expires on July 31--should be renewed. Voto-Bernales reported to the Council that the Committee had considered the latest report of the DRC Group of Experts, which found that the continued presence of illegal armed groups in the DRC represented a serious threat to stability in the region, and that the sanctions on individuals were rarely enforced by DRC authorities. Council members are currently negotiating a French draft resolution to renew the sanctions regime and the mandate of the Group of Experts, which also expires on July 31. End summary.

DRC SANCTIONS REVIEW

12. (C) In advance of the July 31 expiration of the sanctions regime in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Peruvian PermRep and Chairman of the DRC Sanctions Committee Jorge Voto-Bernales briefed the Council on June 23 on the outcome of the Committee's annual sanctions review. Ambassador Voto-Bernales noted that several Committee members had stated their support for renewing sanctions, and that the Committee had agreed on possible actions to improve their implementation based recommendations from the DRC Group of Experts (&the Group8), the body charged with investigating sanctions violations. Ambassador Voto-Bernales also reported that the Committee had designated two additional individuals and five entities for sanctions in March (note: on the joint initiative of USUN, the UK, and France) and had met with representatives of the DRC, Rwanda, Uganda, and Burundi on issues of implementation in those countries.

13. (C) Following Ambassador Voto-Bernales's briefing, the French delegation expressed concern that illegal armed groups continue to traffic in arms, and noted the increasing risk of widespread conflict in the region. The French also introduced a draft resolution to renew the sanctions--which consist of an arms embargo and an international travel ban and assets freeze on individuals found to be violating the embargo, recruiting child soldiers, or impeding disarmament--and the mandate of the Group of Experts, which also expires on July 31. The draft is currently under

negotiation by Council members. Belgium stated that maintaining the sanctions was important for the future of Congo, and that it supported clarifying in the upcoming resolution the exemptions to arms embargo for the Government of the DRC. USUN noted its concern with the deteriorating security situation in the DRC and stressed that the Sanctions Committee had a specific role to play in bringing pressure to bear on those individuals whose actions undermine stability in the DRC. Italy argued that the sanctions regime in the DRC illustrated that sanctions work only where states have the capacity to implement them, and also that the Council should reassess the sanctions regime in light of the newly elected government in the DRC. Italy added, however, that it hoped that the sanctions against recruiting child soldiers would be maintained.

BACKGROUND: COMMITTEE CONSIDERS THE GROUP'S REPORT

¶4. (SBU) On July 12 and 20 the Committee considered the Group's June 13 report, which concluded--as did its two previous reports--that the continued presence of illegal armed groups in the DRC represented a serious threat to stability in the region. The report noted that the sanctions imposed in March on two major gold exporting companies in Uganda found to be financing militias, UCI and Machanga, were successful in halting their operations. However, it also found that the international travel ban and an assets freeze sanctions on those individuals designated by the Committee were rarely enforced by DRC authorities, and sanctioned individuals continued their daily activities with impunity.

¶5. (C) Although the Committee did agree on possible actions to improve sanctions implementation based on the Group's

recommendations, Committee members overwhelmingly considered the specific recommendations to be beyond the competence of the Committee to implement. For example, the Group suggested that the most effective way to address aerial violations of the arms embargo would be to restructure the DRC aviation sector. (USUN noted that this was a long-term capacity-building endeavor that far exceeded the Committee's ability to act upon.) The actions the Committee agreed to therefore consisted mainly of taking note of the recommendations or referring them for comment to the international bodies competent to assess their usefulness.

¶6. (C) USUN stressed that the Committee did not have a mandate to develop capacity in the DRC, and it must now turn its attention back to the core of its mandate, which was considering violations of the arms embargo and imposing sanctions accordingly. The past two reports of the Group of Experts have been heavily focused on addressing the underlying causes of the instability in eastern DRC, which has made that their recommendations of marginal use to the Committee in sanctioning specific individuals.

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